The Unitarian Calendar

RESIGNATION

Thy way be mine; Thou leadest me
  Through waters still and deep;
The dusk of years is over me,—
  I lay me down to sleep.
Each soul that lives is crucified,
  Each calls at last to Thee;
Each wretched heart hath bowed and cried,
  "Do Thou remember me!"
Lord God of Hosts, with me abide
  At my Gethsemane.

—R. D. Ross.

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OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional works.

Address correspondence to the Secretary Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Hon. George Hutchinson.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

Founded in 1827.

Maintained by the Unitarian churches to promote religious and moral education. Publishes manuals and tracts, issues a Sunday-school paper, holds conventions, carries on a book-room. Branch at 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago.

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Address contributions to the Treasurer, Mr. John H. Edwards.

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Organized in 1890.

Promotes the local organization of the women of the Unitarian churches for missionary and denominational work.

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Address correspondence to the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Cyril H. Burdett, 135 Broadway, New York City.

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GOD IN THE WORLD

REV. RICHARD W. BOYNTON

Of the First Unitarian Congregational Society, Buffalo, N. Y.

Whatever is to be said for the speculative truth of the doctrine of the immanence of God,

"In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod,"

the only divine immanence with which we have practically to do as social workers is the universal presence of God in humanity; and humanity is never an abstraction, but always a collection of living, advancing human beings. The shaping of individual souls in the direction of their possible perfection is no petty task to be despised, or to consign those who engage in it to be ranked as inferior men. Socrates spends the greater part of his seventy years in drawing out of a group of Athenian youth some perception and definition of the ultimate beauty and the ultimate truth, and from the fountain of their casual talk springs the world's ethical and religious philosophy. Jesus gives his few brief months of ministry to impressing upon a small band of carefully chosen followers his secret of a more inward and spiritual approach to God and man, and from those searching communications by the wayside and the lakeshore and in the upper chamber, we have the Gospels and the Christian Church and no man knows what store of yet unexhausted impulse toward the perfect life for mankind upon the earth.

THE RESPONSIBILTY OF THE PEW

REV. W. H. LYON, D. D.

Of the First Parish, Brookline, Mass.

The local church consists of two mai nelements, the minister and the people, the leader and the led. The minister is an individual and can easily be held to his responsibility. In fact, the danger is that his responsibility may be overrated, and that, under cover of the common phrase, "Dr. A.'s church," or "Mr. B.'s church," the congregation may slip out of its part of the common work. The payment of pew rent may exhaust its sense of duty.

Hence comes the need of often reminding the congregation that it is not an abstract idea but an organization of individuals, each of whom counts one in the worship and work of the church. Let every member of a parish say to himself on Sunday morning, while he is planning the life of the day, "Now, if I go to church, I shall make the congregation larger by one and by so much help make the occasion more cheerful and successful. I shall by so much make the hymns easier to sing and the responsive psalm more hearty in the reading, as every jar in the battery makes the electric current stronger. I shall expect to be helped, but that is not the whole matter. I shall *be* a help to both the minister and people. This is one of the occasions on which it makes less difference *who* I am than that I am *there*." It seems as if every generous man or woman must decide to go, if the matter stands before him in this light.

Life is neither a pain nor a pleasure, but serious business, which it is our duty to carry through and conclude with honour. —*De Tocqueville.*

TRUTH INDEPENDENT OF MIRACLE

WALTER LLOYD

Devout feeling and right conduct are quite independent of signs and wonders. It surely cannot be imagined for a moment that the obligation to keep the commandments depends upon our acceptance of the miracles of Moses, or that Monotheism is endangered by a disbelief in the miracles of Elijah; or that if we give up the miracles of the Old Testament, we shall cease to find any stimulant to devotion in the Psalms, or hear any exhortation to righteousness in the prophets.

Will anyone assert that the commands reiterated by Jesus—to love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves — lose all their efficacy, if he did not walk upon the water or give a blind man sight; or that even if his own body did not rise from the tomb, there is no beauty or significance left in the Sermon on the Mount?

Miracles, even if they happened, would not belong to the physical order, and would neither bear witness to the spiritual order, nor influence beneficially the spiritual life of man. It is the moral and spiritual power of the Psalmists and Prophets, of Jesus and the Apostles, which is of importance to the religious experience and progress of mankind;—faith, hope, and love, and not powers, wonders, and signs, are the true marks of the divine presence with man. The real greatness of Jesus did not consist in his alleged ability to perform miracles, but in the marvelous spiritual influence he has exercised over the human race.

If thou wouldst make anything a habit, do it; if thou wouldst not make it a habit, do not do it.

—*Epictetus.*

THE UNITARIAN VIEW OF THE BIBLE

BY CHARLES J. PERRY, B. A.

It is not at all unusual to find people who will tell you the Unitarians "do not believe in the Bible;" and it is a sort of revelation to them to learn that we read it regularly in our churches. What is at the bottom of this curious impression? It is this: we deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. We deny that once upon a time, long years ago, God gave once for all, a full complete revelation of himself to man; that he miraculously preserved that revelation within the covers of a certain book; and that ever since that time he has ceased to reveal his truth to men. We deny that the Bible is an infallible and exclusive standard of truth. And we do this partly on critical grounds. A very slight acquaintance with Biblical criticism is sufficient to show that the Bible is a collection of books of very different values and with a very small claim to infallibility; that it must be received like other books, tested and interpreted as they are, and honored for its own sake only and its intrinsic worth. This is the way in which scholars in almost all churches now treat the Bible. It is, I rejoice to say, no longer a peculiar feature of Unitarianism. Looked at in this light, the Bible ceases to be a kind of sibylline oracle and becomes a great reality, a history of the religious growth of one of the most religious peoples that ever dwelt upon the earth, a book containing some of the deepest yearnings, some of the loftiest aspirations, some of the noblest utterances of men; above all, the record of all we know of the life and religion of the world's greatest teacher. We reverence it, therefore, with an honest, healthy reverence, and find it a storehouse of religious experience, from which we may draw forth great spiritual riches.

WHAT ONE CHURCH IS

It would be worth while for any one of the churches of our body to make a careful investigation to ascertain how far the membership of the local church is interested in various forms of social service. In one of the older, though by no means strongest, churches of New England a survey was made to gain this information. Results are extremely interesting, some of which are as follows:—

The parish is represented in the District Nursing Association by the president, two directors and 38 others out of a total membership of 132. The society formed for the purpose of assisting and instructing the large Italian population has a Unitarian president, treasurer and five of the seventeen American members. The church is represented on the board of the Home for Aged Women by the chairman of the Executive Board, one director and 46 other members of the corporation. Thirteen members of this parish are on the Board of Trade. Twenty-four out of the 100 members of the Invalid Aid Association are members of this church. The Charity Club of the city has a Unitarian president, treasurer and ten others of a total of thirty members. Of the 250 members upon the government of the City Hospital this church is represented by the president, one of two vice-presidents, the clerk, the assistant treasurer, two directors and 45 others. The Animal Aid Society, which has 100 members, has for its president, treasurer and 23 others members of this church. Out of a total of 141, the president, vice-president and five directors of the Baby Hospital are Unitarians. The mayor of the city is a member of this church, as is also the city auditor, the assistant postmaster, twelve public school teachers, the truant officer, the assistant city librarian, as well as two of the city

assessors; while in the Park Commission the parish is represented by three of the six members, one of the three being chairman. Outside of the city the church is represented by the visitor for the State Board of Charities, by the lecturer for the Playground Department of the State Civic League, by one of the State House librarians and by the Librarian of the State House Reference Library. One member of the parish is a professor in Vassar College, one (a lawyer) teaches in the Bowdoin night school in Boston and one is Superintendent of the Italian Department of the Dennison House, Boston, and another is teacher of music in the State Normal Schools at Salem and Framingham.

This is indeed an interesting story. It represents the Christian influence of many generations which has been exerted in this historic church. It means not only the stalwart support of many educational, relief and civic organizations in the immediate locality, but many enterprises along the lines of human improvement in various parts of the country. A church that can furnish such inspiration need have no anxiety if it does not transform itself into an organization or group of organizations seeking social betterment in its own particular name. As an inspirational institution such a church is a success, a far greater success than it could be in any other capacity.

L. G. W.

Refrain to-night:
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence, the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And master the devil, or throw him out
With wond'rous potency.

—*Shakespeare.*

THE PASSING OF FRIENDSHIP

REV. ARTHUR M. JUDY

The Indian legend runs, "Let not the grass grow in the path that leads to the house of a friend." If the grass does grow, we shall miss some scene in the drama of our friend's life. We say, "Tomorrow I will do the kindness, tomorrow speak the tender word." But why tomorrow? Who knows but that on the morrow thy friend will not need whatever of hope and strength thy friendship can give today. We are all possessed with the vague idea that if anything tragic is to happen to our friends, it will happen a long time hence,—at present we can rest at ease. But it is a foolish idea. Temptations come as thieves in the night, and always before they are expected. For every day has its temptations, and every day needs our saving influence, if it be possible for us to exert any. Again, you have all experienced the growing apart of friends. You have known what it is to meet acquaintances after a few years' separation, and find them more difficult to approach than strangers. You recall the poem of Jean Ingelow describing the lad and lass who stretch hands over a tiny brook and begin to walk with the current, and walk until the brook, widening into a river, and the river into a gulf, separates them beyond sight and hearing. So we all pass. Today we stand side by side; to-morrow our finger-tips just touch across the broadening stream of life; and the morrow after to-morrow our voices faintly reach each other across the roaring flood of time. Today and not tomorrow, then, let thy soul go out to thy friend. While yet his hand is laid in thine, clasp it heartily. Whatever of courage and tenderness thy grasp can convey, let it be conveyed quickly. The journey of life stays not, and the severing river broadens steadily.

RELIGION ONE

W. J. POTTER

I believe that religion is the expression of man's relation to the universe and its vital powers, or to its living, sustaining energy. From connection with and dependence upon this energy it is not possible for man to escape. The fact of this relation is established by science; and science, in its broad sense, must be depended upon to give the true theory of it. But, in all ages, man has been conscious of it; and his expression of the relation has threefold form,—through thought, through feeling, and through action. Through one or another of all these forms of expression he has sought to perfect his relation to the universal forces and laws. I believe that from this fundamental idea have grown all the special religions, while their distinguishing beliefs and ceremonies have been shaped by the intelligence of the people holding them. I believe, therefore, that all the religions have a natural origin and a natural development; that, by virtue of their common root, they are sects of one universal religion; and that, notwithstanding their differences and antagonisms, resulting from their special doctrines and claims, there are among them certain underlying unities of belief, aspiration and moral sentiment, by which they are bound together in one fellowship.

In the conduct of life habits count for more than maxims, because habit is a living maxim, become flesh and instinct. To reform one's maxims is nothing; it is but to change the title of the book. To learn new habits is everything, for it is to reach the substance of life.

—*H. F. Amiel.*

A NEW DANGER

REV. J. H. CROOKER, D. D.

Of the Roslindale Unitarian Church, Roslindale, Mass.

Every age is in danger of being injured by its own excellence. The watchword of its ambition tends to become a mere cant phrase. The shibboleth of a great cause often ends in becoming a means of death. A new truth hardened into dogma brings decrepitude. A sentiment, noble in itself, may so narrow life that it finally leads in more evils than it cures. Charity may be so indiscriminate that it curses rather than blesses. Tenderness with children may so run riot that more harm than good is done: the blessed kindergarten is probably now spoiling many lives.

Extremes and excesses in things intrinsically valuable become vicious. Individualism represents a noble and needed gospel; to be one's self is necessary. But individualism pushed too far is cold, barren, repellant. Religion needs freedom, the condition of vigorous life and wholesome progress. But continued emphasis on freedom to the neglect of obedience and loyalty perverts life by putting for the end of our being what is only its condition.

There are times when it is very important to plead for reason in religion; the shackles must be broken and the spirit liberated. But the released prisoner is still in need; he becomes free that he may live. So religion is the larger sanctity and reason must serve at its altar. Otherwise we have a loveless rationalism that kills piety.

Just here lies the danger of our modern social enthusiasts. They represent a providential ministry. Truth, justice, love must be made effective in social organizations. Religion must be more than a private luxury or individual concern.

The ministry of the church must have a wide public sweep. But if we dwell too much upon "Applied Christianity," the time will come when we shall have very little Christianity, and that not worth applying. Faith needs practical expression, but faith comes first. The roots bear the fruits: the soul must be rooted in God before it can succeed in establishing godliness.

"Social Service" is fast becoming mere demagogic cant. We forget that the value of the service depends upon the spiritual quality of the one who serves. The hand alone can work no regeneration in the slums; that comes from the heart that has been regenerated by the grace of God. No social heaven can be built on mere changes in material conditions. The gateway to eternal joy evermore swings on soul-hinges. The way of salvation is not through theatrical properties or ministries that only reach man the animal. Let us beware lest we fall into mere outwardness in our humanities and drag the great word "service" down to the level of the cant of demagogue or fanatic.

"THE CHURCH"

JOHN PAGE HOPPS

The claim of the Church is only a variation of the papal claim. In the Catholic Church, and in what is called the High Church in England, the Church is presented as a mystical body, endowed with the grace of God in a miraculous manner, so that it is the permanent channel of his saving mercy. Out of it there is no salvation, or no certainty of it. Its sacraments are supernaturally efficacious in the saving of the soul, and its priests

are the real mediators between God and man. But, when you get to the essence of this theory of the authority of the Church, you find it resolves itself into the theory of the authority of the priest. He is a kind of pope in miniature; by the magic waters of baptism, he charms away the taint of original sin; he works miracles for diseased and sinking souls; he hears confessions and grants absolution or imposes penance; he converts bread and wine into the body and blood of God; he announces the will of the Almighty, and assumes to have in his keeping both the word of God and the mind of man.

Now all the tendencies and weaknesses of poor human nature that lead to the success of the claims of the pope lead to the success of the claims of the priest: and, as a matter of fact, the doctrine of the authority of the priest is making enormous way in the Established Church of England itself. "The Church," of which they speak, is a mere fiction, a figment, a mystical nonentity; the real thing is the authority of the priests who constitute the Church for which such claims are made.

But here, again, the whole structure is built upon an absolutely arbitrary assumption. As a matter of fact, the Church is a purely political institution. In England it is the outcome of an Act of Parliament; and an Act of Parliament could reduce it to the level of the Congregational Union. All else is the merest assertion, with nothing to support it but a tradition derived from the Romish Church which denies its authority and scouts its claims.

Nor deem that acts heroic wait on chance:
The man's whole life preludes the single deed.

—*J. R. Lowell.*

UNITARIAN HYMN

Touch Thou mine eyes,—the somber shadows falling
Shut from my sight the kindly light of day!
Out of the depths my soul to Thee is calling,
Touch Thou mine eyes, I cannot see the way!

Dark is the path, through desert places leading,
Lonely and chill the wastes of doubt and fear;
Fainting I fall, with bruised feet and bleeding,
Oh, touch mine eyes, that I may know Thee near!

Fain would I see, as in the olden story,
Thy shining hosts encamped on every side;
Angels of light, armed with Thy power and glory,
To guard my steps, whatever may betide.

Frail is the flesh that waits for Thine appearing,
Blind is the dust that turns to Thee for sight;
Thy power must quicken earthly sight and hearing,
Thy word impart the Spirit's life and light.

Life of the life that hour by hour is dying,
Dying I live by Thy sustaining grace!
Father who hearest all Thy children's crying,
Touch Thou mine eyes, that I may see Thy face!

MARION FRANKLIN HAM, 1911.

Our lives make a moral tradition for our individual selves, as the life of mankind at large makes a moral tradition for the race; and to have once acted greatly, seems a reason why we should always be noble.

—*George Eliot.*

GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

REV. PAUL REVERE FROTHINGHAM

Of the Arlington Street Church, Boston, Mass.

None of us have any permanent or peculiar right to plenty, peace, and power. We have to take life as we find it. We cannot buy up property in spiritual estate, or stake out extensive claims in the realms of happiness or health which the laws of life are bound to respect. Trespassers can neither be forbidden here nor brought before the court for prosecution, and all attempts to fence one's self away as having special privilege is worse than useless. The lot of the Hebrews in their exile was all the harder to endure because they had thought themselves a chosen people, the favorites of God, and their land divinely set apart to be uncommonly and permanently blessed. And thus it is with each of us. "The world," as someone has said, "cannot be our intimate friend, patient with our eccentricities smoothing our paths. We must learn this just as we learn not to pick up a live wire," and not to get in the way of destructive forces generally. For, "if it is true that God makes no two men alike, it is equally true that he sends his rain on the just and on the unjust, and rules his universe with inexorable laws." If we do not learn this, if we insist on thinking that we have a special right to freedom from hardship and disappointment, then the periods of captivity, when they come upon us, are certain to be so much the more desolate and trying. In short, there is a very simple and practical philosophy of life which none of us can learn too early or too thoroughly. The wise and seasoned sailor does not leave the placid waters of the sheltered harbor, expecting that the ocean all the way across will be permanently calm and the breezes gentle day by day in long succession. No

matter how large the vessel is in which he sails, he faces the possibility of storms and tossing. He does not worry about them in advance, or gloomily anticipate their possible fury. But, when they come, he knows that they are just a part of life for those "that go down to the sea in ships, and that do business in great waters."

Whether or not, therefore, we can sing the Lord's song in the strange land of captivity to loss or disappointment, this at least we see is true: We need not make its evils worse by dwelling on our hardships as exceptional or peculiar to ourselves.

WHERE TO FIND GOD

FRANK WALTERS

The whole history of the world proves that men cannot be satisfied without religious faith; they cannot rest until they find a living God to love, and trust, and worship. There have been many clever arguments to prove that there is a God,—but the finest evidence is found within the deepest experience of the human soul. Nothing is more convincing of God's existence than this craving of the human mind to find an Infinite Mind, this throbbing of the human heart to feel the sympathy of an Eternal Love.

When I see the ocean rise in one great tidal-wave to flood every shore, then I know that some mighty attractive power is at work, brooding over those restless waters. And so, when I see the tides of human thought and feeling surge and swell in longing, and hope, and aspiration, then I know that there must be a divine attraction drawing all souls to God. When we study the

religions of the world, when we explore the religious consciousness, then we find this to be the deepest need of man's nature: "O that I knew where I might find God!"

NOTES

It is with extreme regret that we learn of the death of Prof. Nicholas P. Gilman, Caleb Brewster Hackley Professor of Sociology and Ethics of the Meadville Theological School. Prof. Gilman has been for many years a loyal Unitarian, representing the sanity and generous toleration of Unitarianism, and uniting with it advanced and progressive interpretations of the great modern questions of sociology and economics. He passed away at Meadville on Jan. 23d.

Dr. Samuel M. Crothers, of the First Unitarian Church of Cambridge, has left this country for Europe for an absence of about seven months. During this time the pulpit of the First Church is being supplied by various preachers, including one or more from England.

Rev. Henry C. Parker, of Woburn, is absent in Texas as a representative of the American Unitarian Association on the Billings Lectureship Foundation. Mr. Parker will spend most of his time at San Antonio, where a new organization has been formed and where there are enthusiastic expectations of the establishment of a strong Unitarian centre.

Rev. Lewis G. Wilson, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, is at present making a rapid trip through the Rocky Mountains and the

South. He will attend union services of the Helena and Great Falls churches, meet the trustees of the church in Butte and prepare the way for the settlement of a minister, inspect the work at Boise, and arrange at Salt Lake City for the revival of the church, which has of late been holding lay services. Before his return he will attend the installation of Rev. George Kent at New Orleans, and visit the churches at Memphis, Tenn., and other places.

An attractive program of the work done by the Unity Church Laymen's Club, of Brockton, has come to our desk. Meetings have been held through the winter, and speakers have been secured who represent various philanthropic and civic organizations. Among the subjects treated are, first, "Charitable Work in the City of Brockton;" second, "Housing and Sanitary Conditions in the City;" third, "Crime in Brockton;" fourth, "Financing a City;" fifth, "Labor Conditions in Brockton." On April 15th the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association will be the guest, and the series will close with Ladies' Night on May 27th.

At Northampton, Mass., at the suggestion of the Unitarian Commission on the Church and the Social Question a committee has been appointed to make careful investigations into the various forms of civic and philanthropic work of the city. A committee has also been appointed to co-operate with the Men and Religion movement.

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